



Neighborhood Networks Week

August 1–6, 2005

*Invite the Neighborhood.
Widen the Network.*



PLANNING GUIDE

Invite the Neighborhood ***Widen the Network***

Dear Center Directors and Participants:

Neighborhood Networks Week gets better and more popular every year—thanks to good planning, great energy, and creative magic from enthusiastic Neighborhood Networks centers across America. Last year, hundreds of centers held exciting events, marking the highest Neighborhood Networks Week participation rate ever!

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Fifth Annual Neighborhood Networks Week will take place August 1–6, 2005. This year's theme, *Invite the Neighborhood. Widen the Network.* encourages broad community support and involvement with Neighborhood Networks centers. Our goal is to increase community awareness about the HUD initiative and showcase the impressive achievements and value of Neighborhood Networks centers nationwide. By sharing all of the wonderful work that centers do, centers will be more likely to increase resident participation and attract community partners and volunteers.

We are pleased to share with you this new Planning Guide for Neighborhood Networks Week 2005. The guide is filled with fresh ideas, strategies, and tips that give Neighborhood Networks centers guidance and resources to plan successful events in their own communities.

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005 is special because it coincides with the initiative's 10th anniversary. Ten years ago, HUD created the Neighborhood Networks initiative to connect residents and families to the endless opportunities of the digital age. Today, Neighborhood Networks is recognized for its success Delivering Technology Access to America's Communities.

We hope to have even more centers participate this year, helping to spread the word about Neighborhood Networks nationwide. Registration is free and easy! Visit the Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org or contact the Neighborhood Networks Information Center at (888) 312-2743 or TTY (800) 483-2209.

Thank you for your involvement and support of Neighborhood Networks Week 2005. I look forward to hearing about the exciting events you plan for your community.

Sincerely,



Delores A. Pruden
Director



Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide



Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

This publication was developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for use by Neighborhood Networks centers.

In 1995, HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing Programs created Neighborhood Networks to encourage property owners and managers to establish multiservice community learning centers in HUD insured and assisted housing. Neighborhood Networks was one of the first federal initiatives to promote self-sufficiency and help provide technology access to low-income housing communities.

Today, in urban centers and rural towns across the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, Neighborhood Networks centers are placing the power of technology in the hands of people.

No two Neighborhood Networks centers are alike. With support from innovative public-private partnerships, Neighborhood Networks centers sponsor a range of services and programs. Nearly all centers offer job-training and educational opportunities, and many also provide programs that include access to healthcare information and microenterprise development.

This guide was published in 2005.

To receive copies of this publication, contact:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Neighborhood Networks
2277 Research Boulevard, 5J
Rockville, MD 20850

Neighborhood Networks Information Center
Toll free (888) 312-2743
E-mail: neighborhoodnetworks@hud.gov
TTY: (800) 483-2209

All publications are available for downloading from the Neighborhood Networks Web site at ***www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org***.



Contents

Why We Observe Neighborhood Networks Week	1
Neighborhood Networks Week History	1
Neighborhood Networks Week 2005	2
About the 2005 Planning Guide	2
What Can Neighborhood Networks Week Do for Centers?	2
How to Participate	3
Special Events	5
One-Day Special Events	5
Open House	5
Grand Opening	5
Arts and Music Festival	5
Awards Ceremony	6
Community Carnival	6
10th Anniversary Neighborhood Networks Celebration	7
Theme-Related Days	7
Career Day	7
Family Fun Day	8
Education Day	8
Reading Is Fun Day	9
Safety Awareness Day	9
Technology Day	9
Health and Fitness Day	10
Holiday Fun	10
Participate in National Activities	10
Planning a Successful Event	11
Tapping Resources	11
Event Planning: Steps to Success	11
Getting the Word Out	13

Contents (continued)

Registration Form	15
Sample Media Documents	17
Sample Proclamation	18
Sample Media Advisory	19
Sample News Release	20
Sample Radio Public Service Announcement	21
Sample Event Invitation	22



Why We Observe Neighborhood Networks Week

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) observes Neighborhood Networks Week each year to pay tribute to residents, property owners and managers, partners, volunteers, HUD staff, and others who help make Neighborhood Networks what it is today—a successful community-based initiative.

Neighborhood Networks Week raises public awareness about center programs that are helping residents realize their dreams. It is a showcase for recognizing the achievements of families living in HUD insured and assisted housing.

Neighborhood Networks Week History

In 2000, HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing Programs kicked off its first Neighborhood Networks Week to acknowledge the first 5 years of the initiative. The weeklong celebration highlighted the role Neighborhood Networks centers play in creating digital opportunity for residents living in HUD insured and assisted housing. National events included a soccer clinic with Major League Soccer players and live Web casts with the National Zoo, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Monster.com, and WebMD.

Participating Neighborhood Networks centers held local events, such as open houses, grand openings, job fairs, health screenings, safety awareness seminars, and community outreach days. In 2000, HUD developed this guide, which is updated annually, to assist centers with event planning.



Neighborhood Networks Week was not observed in 2001 but returned in 2002, 2003, and 2004 with many exciting national, regional, and local events. Some noteworthy national events have included:

- ◆ Annual Youth Poster Contests.
- ◆ A Game Show with Nortel Networks Kidz Online.
- ◆ A Community Outreach Day.
- ◆ Neighborhood Networks Forums for Property Owners and Managers.
- ◆ Live Web casts with Astronauts and Scientists from NASA.
- ◆ Live Web chats with Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) players Chamique Holdsclaw and Teresa Weatherspoon.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005

This year's Neighborhood Networks theme is *Invite the Neighborhood. Widen the Network.*

Neighborhood Networks centers are encouraged to reach out to their communities to increase support and involvement by joining in the week of August 1–6. Locally sponsored events, which may include community outreach days, open houses, job and health fairs, carnivals, and grand openings, will help to increase community awareness about centers and showcase their impressive achievements and value nationwide.

Participating in these events can help show the community how centers create employment and job-training opportunities, advance literacy, improve computer access, and promote the self-sufficiency of families in HUD multifamily insured and assisted housing.

This year's Neighborhood Networks Week also has special meaning as HUD observes the 10th anniversary of the initiative, which began in September 1995. This milestone presents a great marketing opportunity for centers to create a celebration recognizing the anniversary.

About the 2005 Planning Guide

This planning guide is a how-to manual that provides practical advice about planning and holding successful events during Neighborhood Networks Week. It is designed to help centers select one or more activities that will benefit them. It includes fresh event ideas, planning tips, and sample documents to help centers promote their events.

In addition to local events planned by centers, HUD is planning several national events for kids, adults, families, and seniors. A list of local and national events will be posted on the Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org. Call toll free (888) 312–2743 for assistance and to learn more about national events planned for Neighborhood Networks Week 2005.

What Can Neighborhood Networks Week Do for Centers?

Holding at least one Neighborhood Networks Week 2005 event can do a lot for a center. Inviting the community will help a center widen its network and increase opportunities for future success. Opening doors to the neighborhood with exciting events and activities will help a center highlight its contributions and value to the larger community.

This guide provides centers with a step-by-step approach to planning events. By participating, a center can:

- ◆ Honor parents, kids, center staff, mentors, and partners for their support.
- ◆ Highlight job-training and educational opportunities.
- ◆ Increase resident involvement.
- ◆ Attract new partners and volunteers.
- ◆ Foster good community relations.
- ◆ Engage youth, adults, and families in educational and rewarding events.
- ◆ Build fundraising capacity.

Invite the Neighborhood

Widen the Network

- ◆ Enhance collaboration between the property owner and/or manager and the center staff.
- ◆ Increase public awareness.

The event planning process can have its own rewards. People who are a part of a successful center event planning team may be energized to make a long-term commitment to the center.

How to Participate

Registering for Neighborhood Networks Week is easy and it's free! Just follow these basic steps:

- ◆ Complete the registration form, which is available on the Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org and later in this guide or you may call the Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll free at (888) 312-2743 or TTY (800) 483-2209 to register by telephone. Online registration is encouraged.
- ◆ Watch for e-mails and faxes about national and regional events in which centers can participate.

I enjoyed Neighborhood Networks Week tremendously! Our center hosted events every day of the Week in 2004, and with some organization and help from partners and volunteers, it really wasn't so difficult. Because of media outreach, our center was featured in articles in several local newspapers, which helped us expand our reach beyond the immediate community.

Several residents benefited from the job fair and college fair through job offers and scholarships, and the center now has a partnership with an organization that we originally contacted for one of the Neighborhood Networks Week events. I am looking forward to participating in Neighborhood Networks Week again this year!

—Sonya Manners, Center Director,
Dartmouth Square Apartments, Inkster, Michigan



Special Events

The best part about planning Neighborhood Networks Week events is the flexibility and options available to centers. In this planning guide, centers will find several ideas for holding single or theme-related days that can be customized to meet local community needs.

One-Day Special Events

The following are examples of 1-day special events that can encourage community participation. These events may appeal to one or more groups centers are trying to reach.

Open House

This easy-to-create center event can spark local community and media interest. An open house is also the perfect event to support the 2005 Neighborhood Networks Week theme: *Invite the Neighborhood. Widen the Network.*

An open house gives Neighborhood Networks centers an opportunity to showcase their services to the community and invite potential partners and volunteers. Some activities to include during an open house are:

- ◆ Spotlight a program. Invite residents, community partners, local officials, and businesses to the center and showcase a program.
- ◆ Hold a recognition ceremony. Highlight the achievements of residents or a recent graduating class by presenting awards or certificates. Provide refreshments to encourage invitees to network and talk with center staff.

Grand Opening

Centers that are planning to open this summer can host a grand opening ceremony during Neighborhood Networks Week. A grand opening is an excellent way for a center to highlight and support the 2005 Neighborhood Networks theme, *Invite the Neighborhood. Widen the Network.* To host a grand opening, centers can:

- ◆ Invite residents and the public to visit the new center to see the various programs that are offered.
- ◆ Advertise in the Volunteer Opportunities section of local newspapers to attract potential volunteers to the grand opening.
- ◆ Ask a local business to become a partner and donate refreshments or a door prize.
- ◆ Get help from a volunteer or hire a photographer to take high-resolution photos of the grand opening. Invite the local media (see the publicity campaign later in this guide) and invite community leaders and others who are more likely to attend if they think the event will be publicized.
- ◆ Recognize center partners.

Arts and Music Festival

Many Neighborhood Networks centers sponsor creative music and arts programs that can be highlighted through exhibits and concerts during Neighborhood Networks Week. Centers can also showcase the creative works of residents by setting up a center art gallery for public viewing, or hold a music concert to raise funds.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

Centers can also:

- ◆ Invite other local artists and musicians to attend the event.
- ◆ Ask local businesses and nonprofits or colleges that support the arts to participate and provide support or resources to further center programs.
- ◆ Provide profiles of talented residents who have contributed locally to the arts and music.
- ◆ Develop a theme and tagline and use them in promotional materials, such as posters or news releases.
- ◆ Invite the media.

Awards Ceremony

Neighborhood Networks Week is a good time to celebrate the achievements of residents, center staff, volunteers, and partners. It also presents an opportunity to engage the community and gain media attention. There are many different types of awards ceremonies for Neighborhood Networks participants and supporters. Centers

can sponsor an event such as a luncheon, tea, reception, or dinner to recognize:

- ◆ Property owners and managers. Pay special tribute to the property owner and/or manager for their contributions to the center, which will help to build positive relationships and foster continuing support.
- ◆ Staff and volunteers. Honor the outstanding work and contributions of dedicated staff and volunteers, which may help to boost work enthusiasm and reduce turnover rates.
- ◆ Residents. Create specific awards for seniors, adults, and youth to acknowledge their special achievement or reaching a key personal goal. Presenting awards to residents will help to increase their confidence and involvement.
- ◆ Partners. Recognizing center partners increases the chances that they will stay involved. Honoring partners also shows potential new partners the value of participation. Consider presenting a partner with a plaque or framed certificate of appreciation.

Community Carnival

This classic summer event is always an attention grabber and is popular with children. Community carnivals are effective events for reaching out to the larger community. They are fun and create an opportunity to bring communities together. Here are some suggestions:

- ◆ Establish a center committee to create a series of games and activities in which children and adults can participate.
- ◆ Prepare a variety of foods and treats that appeal to both children and adults. At carnivals, serving good food is vital to creating a fun and enjoyable atmosphere.



- ◆ Hire a clown to entertain and paint children's faces.
- ◆ Advertise a carnival and market it with posters, flyers, and a news release.
- ◆ Take high-resolution photos and share them with participants and the media.

10th Anniversary Neighborhood Networks Celebration

Hold a community or neighborhood block party to observe Neighborhood Networks' 10th Anniversary. A social event such as this will surely increase community awareness.

- ◆ Barbecues or buffets make excellent food choices for block parties or summer celebrations.
- ◆ Bake a special Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary cake.

Highlight to the media and community that the center is one of a large community of Neighborhood Networks centers across America, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Create marketing and media materials to highlight the center and the Neighborhood Networks 10th Anniversary.

Use the celebration as a platform to announce a new partnership or program.

Theme-Related Days

Many Neighborhood Networks centers elect to have theme-related days—another good way to attract residents and the surrounding community to an event. Pick one or more days during the week and plan activities or events around a particular theme. Many themes can include activities for all age groups.

Center Events That Soared!

Successful events held during previous Neighborhood Networks Weeks include:

- ◆ At Mountain Terrace Neighborhood Networks Center in Westminster, Colorado, youth were honored for their participation in a 12-week Computer Quest Problems Program. Projects ranged from keyboarding skills to poetry writing.
- ◆ At the Havana Heights Neighborhood Networks Center in Havana, Florida, dads and daughters, moms and sons, and sisters and brothers participated in a special family dance.
- ◆ At Pico Union Neighborhood Networks Center in Los Angeles, California, residents participated in a community fair with rides, food, entertainment, and health services such as immunizations for children, eye exams, and free glasses. In addition, there was service information from 35 nonprofits, information for first-time homebuyers, six computer raffles, and help with public library registrations.

Below are some ideas for theme-related days—several of these have been done successfully by Neighborhood Networks centers.

Career Day

- ◆ Host a career or job fair and invite local employers and employment specialists to meet with residents about local job opportunities and training/skills needed for particular positions.
- ◆ Arrange transportation for residents to attend a nearby job fair scheduled during

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005.

- ◆ Invite people from the community who are currently employed to speak to residents at the center about their path to employment, including special training and education.

Our center held a grand re-opening to introduce residents to the new center director and reacquaint them with the center's programs. Participation in the center's programs before the event was low, but after Neighborhood Networks Week, I had more residents in the center than we could handle at one time!

—Frances Mundhenk,
Greenwood Community Networks, Richmond, Indiana

- ◆ Invite a local One-Stop job center or local business to hold a résumé writing or interview preparation session.
- ◆ Invite local representatives from welfare-to-work initiatives to the center to speak with residents about short- and long-term strategies for employment.
- ◆ Connect residents with professionals or skilled workers who can serve as mentors for a day or week.
- ◆ Design an activity in which youth at the center choose a career and come to the center dressed as someone in that profession. Encourage role playing and career information exchange.

Family Fun Day

- ◆ Host family fun events that allow parents to come with their children and socialize with other residents.
- ◆ Hold a barbecue or buffet and encourage group discussions.
- ◆ Create sporting events for the entire family, such as softball, volleyball, and team challenges.
- ◆ Hold a family dance and encourage moms, dads, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, grandmothers, grandfathers, and extended family members to join the fun.

- ◆ Hold a family fun day on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon to ensure maximum participation.

Education Day

- ◆ Plan a day trip to a local museum or a nature trip to a nearby park or recreational facility. Create a positive learning experience by exploring history, natural resources, wildlife, rocks, fossils, energy conservation, and much more.
- ◆ Plan a trip to a local university and arrange for a tour to enlighten youth about the college-learning environment.
- ◆ Invite youth, parents, teachers, and community members to visit the center and give testimonials about the impact of the center's education and afterschool programming on their lives.
- ◆ Host an information session describing educational resources available within the community. Invite a representative from a postsecondary school or the state or U.S. Department of Education to describe the importance of a well-rounded education.
- ◆ Hold a spelling bee, essay or poster contest, or play a trivia game designed to spark educational interest among youth.

Reading Is Fun Day

- ◆ Plan a trip to the local library and schedule a time when a librarian can provide a tour and give kids tips about library etiquette and good reading habits.
- ◆ Invite the local literacy council to the center to hold private consultations with adults in the community who desire to learn how to read.
- ◆ Invite a local celebrity or popular teacher to read a book aloud to children at the center.
- ◆ Create a book club and let the club develop and publicize a list of books to read.
- ◆ Take kids to a local bookstore for story time or set up a meeting with an author who can share his or her experiences about reading and writing.

Safety Awareness Day

- ◆ Host a luncheon and invite local healthcare professionals to teach parents and children tips on how to prevent injuries and avoid potential emergencies.
- ◆ Invite the local police department to visit the center to describe their programs and measures they are taking to fight crime in the community. Work with the police department to create a local Neighborhood Watch committee.
- ◆ Offer free bicycle and child seat inspections.
- ◆ Invite a school crossing guard or police officer to the center to discuss the dangers of jaywalking, intersections, bridges, and railroad crossings.
- ◆ Invite the local fire department to speak about fire prevention and what to do in case of a fire.



- ◆ Give out a bag of goodies full of safety materials donated by local nonprofit organizations.
- ◆ Have a nurse or physician from the local children's hospital conduct a program on poison prevention/control (Mr. Yuk Poison Campaign).

Technology Day

- ◆ Invite local college students majoring in computer science to visit the center and explain the importance of learning technology in the digital age. Ask the students to help guide residents through a technology training session.
- ◆ Hold a Technology Expo, inviting local technology organizations, stores, and businesses to showcase and discuss current and upcoming technologies.
- ◆ Create a center Web site from scratch. A simple five-page site can be set up in a day with help from a Web expert. Involve residents in the planning and technology stages.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

- ◆ Hold a Senior Surfer session led by a senior in the community who has become an expert Web researcher. Search for healthcare information or ask seniors to conduct searches about topics of interest to them.

Health and Fitness Day

- ◆ Hold a health fair that provides residents with comprehensive information about available healthcare, medical services, and resources available to the community.
- ◆ Provide free dental and blood pressure screenings with help from local professional groups. These groups will usually provide informational materials and speakers.
- ◆ Ask a nutritionist or nurse (recommended by a local clinic or hospital) to talk to children about good eating habits and the need for a balanced diet.
- ◆ Provide parents with information about free or low-cost children's health insurance programs and immunizations.
- ◆ Invite a fitness and health instructor to the center. Discuss the importance of exercise for reducing risks for obesity in children

and adults. Provide valuable tips for routine exercise and healthy eating habits.

- ◆ Contact pharmaceutical or biotechnology companies and have their local representatives bring free literature and educational materials on high-risk diseases.

Holiday Fun

Hold a Holiday Fun Fest filled with traditions and fun activities focused on special or unusual worldwide August observances, such as National Respect for Parents Day (August 1), National Ice Cream Sandwich Day (August 2), National Friendship Day (August 3), Twins Day Festival (August 4), National Mustard Day (August 5), and Wiggle Your Toes Day (August 6). Centers can help residents learn about these holidays by researching them on the Internet.

Participate in National Activities

Several national activities are planned for Neighborhood Networks Week 2005. Learn more by visiting www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org or calling the Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll free at (888) 312-2743 or TTY (800) 483-2209.

Welcome to the Web Zone

Do not miss an opportunity to participate in a Neighborhood Networks Week Web event. These interactive activities give kids and adults at centers a chance to participate in live Web casts or chats. Previous Web events have featured WNBA's Chamique Holdsclaw and Teresa Weatherspoon, Kidz Online, NASA, and Monster.com. Check the Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org for announcements about this year's Web events.

Joining a Web cast is free! All you need to do is download Windows Media Player or RealOne Player multimedia software to participate. Software is free and can be downloaded at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org. Center directors are encouraged to involve center users in the downloading process to demonstrate how software is available on the Web.

It is important to download these programs at least a day before a scheduled event in case of technical difficulties.



Planning a Successful Event

Behind most successful events are good planning and preparation, and Neighborhood Networks Week events are no different. But planning efforts do not have to be too complicated or overwhelming. With good resources and a little help, centers can be well on their way to holding a rewarding event.

Tapping Resources

Whether centers are planning one or a series of Neighborhood Networks Week events, there are many people they can reach out to for advice and guidance. Resources are right at your fingertips:

- ◆ Call the Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll free at (888) 312-2743 to receive valuable guidance, planning tips, examples of successful events, and contact information for local Neighborhood Networks Coordinators.
- ◆ Seek assistance from center staff, residents, and partners.
- ◆ Collaborate with other Neighborhood Networks centers and consortia to develop shared events.

Event Planning: Steps to Success

Below is a checklist for a large event that should be planned months in advance. Even if you do not have that much time to plan an event, review this checklist to be sure not to forget a critical aspect of making a successful event. For tips on publicizing events, see the Media Tips for Making News box in this section.



Step 1

- ❑ Identify an event committee and assign roles that include development of publicity materials, site logistics, and media contacts.
- ❑ Hold a first committee meeting to determine goals to achieve from the event.
- ❑ Select an event, plan a timetable, and create a budget. Be sure to include milestones.

Step 2

- ❑ Recruit volunteers by speaking to center users, residents, community groups, clubs, faith-based organizations, and others.
- ❑ Solicit support such as funds, materials, and volunteers.
- ❑ Invite key speakers and local public figures.
- ❑ Prepare an invitation list.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

- ❑ Draft a “Save-the-Date” postcard and/or flyer/invitation.
- ❑ Print and mail your postcard and/or flyer.
- ❑ Secure your location.

Step 3

- ❑ Develop a specific event schedule to include length of event, speakers and length of speeches, and entertainment.
- ❑ Arrange for potential door prizes and event mementos, such as buttons, key rings, or T-shirts.
- ❑ Prepare posters, banners, and other event materials.

Step 4

- ❑ Reconfirm all participants.
- ❑ Obtain speaker biographies.
- ❑ Conduct an early walkthrough of the site.
- ❑ Arrange for podium, seating, and decorations.
- ❑ Secure sound, lighting, and staging needs.
- ❑ Create charts and visual aids.

Step 5

- ❑ Hold a volunteer orientation session.
- ❑ Identify one or two spokespeople to serve as technical resources or experts for reporters.
- ❑ Develop certificates for participants.

Step 6

- ❑ Draft talking points for speakers, if necessary.
- ❑ Call event participants to check needs. For example, do they need a microphone or videotape player?



- ❑ Make followup calls to invitees.
- ❑ Hang banners and posters.

Step 7

- ❑ Prepare an event agenda.

Step 8

- ❑ On the day of the event, arrive at the site at least 2 hours in advance to ensure everything is in place and operational, including microphone, sound system, and other equipment. Setup can also be done the evening before the event.
- ❑ Make sure speakers have their talking points.

Step 9

- ❑ After the event, send thank you notes to speakers and partners who provided food, materials, or funding. Follow up with potential new partners, participants, reporters, or anyone else who needs additional information.

Getting the Word Out

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005 presents an exciting opportunity to publicize centers and showcase their services to residents and the community. Centers are encouraged to reach out to a variety of community stakeholders, including media. In 2005, Neighborhood Networks observes its 10th Anniversary, which helps increase the national significance of center events. Reporters are often interested in events tied to a national story angle.

A well-conceived, strategic, and integrated publicity campaign is essential to achieving the goals of a Neighborhood Networks Week event. Even the best-planned event will not succeed if there is no audience. Developing effective relationships with all center audiences—residents, community leaders, partners, media, and others—can provide long-term benefits.

Media attention can provide:

- ◆ Credibility for center messages or events that cannot be obtained through expensive advertising.
- ◆ The opportunity to reach people who may wish to attend your event or participate in center programs.
- ◆ The opportunity to attract new partners and supporters.

Here are some basic publicity tactics to consider:

- ◆ Take advantage of bulletin boards throughout the community where a center can publicize its Neighborhood Networks Week event for free.
- ◆ Arrange to post materials, such as posters, fact sheets, brochures, and flyers promoting the event at local libraries, grocery stores, malls, or other public message spaces.
- ◆ Call local newspapers and then send a media advisory to the media contact with whom you spoke. (See samples at the end of this guide.)
- ◆ If the center has a Web site, be sure to highlight events planned during Neighborhood Networks Week. As far in advance as possible, call local broadcast media to speak with the public service director about the event. Inform specialty (seniors for example) and culturally focused newspapers and magazines well in advance about the event and why it might interest readers.
- ◆ Write letters to the editor about the upcoming event.
- ◆ Translate materials into other languages, as appropriate, to reach minority and ethnic populations in the community.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

Media Tips for Making News

Below are a timeline, action steps, and media tips to help Neighborhood Networks Week events make the news. For examples of publicity materials, see Sample Media Documents at the end of this guide.

1 Month Prior to Event

1. Prepare or update the center's media list. Centers can contact the Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll free at (888) 312-2743 for local media contact lists.
2. Kick off advance publicity activities, such as creating public service announcements and placing advertising in monthly publications.

2–4 Weeks Prior to Event

1. Send information to local newspapers, television, and radio stations for their community calendars.
2. Arrange for an event photographer to take high-resolution photos.
3. Complete a media advisory.
4. Write a news release.

1–2 Weeks Prior to Event

1. Select press packet contents.

2. Mail the media advisory to weekly newspapers.
3. Call media to confirm receipt and pitch story.

1 Week Prior to Event

1. Write and e-mail or fax a news release. (Most reporters and editors today prefer e-mailed releases, but do not send attachments unless the news source prefers it that way. Instead, cut and paste the release into your e-mail.)
2. Prepare press packets.
3. Fax media advisory to television and radio stations.

Day of Event

1. Make last-minute followup media calls.
2. Greet reporters as they arrive, distribute press packets, and introduce media to speakers, residents, and partners they may wish to interview.

After Event

1. Respond to media inquiries.
2. Track media coverage.



Name/Title _____

Center Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail Address _____

Property Name _____

Property Contact _____ Phone Number _____

1. Type of housing served (check all that apply)
☐ Senior ☐ Family ☐ Assisted ☐ Market rate
 ___ Section 8
 ___ Section 236
 ___ Public housing
2. Date your center became operational _____
3. Will your center be holding a local event during Neighborhood Networks Week? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please complete the information below.
Name of Event _____ Date _____ Time _____
Description of Event _____
Anticipated Attendance _____
4. Will the center participate in any of the national events during Neighborhood Networks Week? ☐ Yes ☐ No

This form is available on the Neighborhood Networks Web site. Centers can register online at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org or call the Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll free at (888) 312-2743 or TTY (800) 483-2209.



Sample Media Documents

Following are some sample media documents that can be used to promote Neighborhood Networks Week events. Centers can customize them to suit their own needs and events. For more sample news releases and brochure ideas, see the electronic templates on the Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

Sample Proclamation

A proclamation is usually presented by a local public official to the Neighborhood Networks center in recognition of a milestone or event.

To request a proclamation, a center representative should contact the office of the local public official, describe the event or occasion, and ask if the public official can present a proclamation to the center. Proclamations usually are presented at public events.

To assist the office with preparation of the proclamation, a center should provide basic but essential information about the event, the center, and HUD's Neighborhood Networks initiative. The information that is provided usually appears very formally, using "Whereas" clauses as shown on the next page.

The following general language can help a center prepare a proclamation.

Neighborhood Networks Week Proclamation

Whereas [insert the name of the center] [insert nature of event, such as marking the celebration of Neighborhood Networks Week 2005]...

and

Whereas [insert the name of the center] has provided essential programs and services, such as [insert], which enable residents to move toward self-sufficiency...

and

Whereas [name of center] is one of hundreds of Neighborhood Networks centers across America, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands...

and

Whereas, Neighborhood Networks launched in 1995, is a community-based initiative created by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Through innovative public and private partnerships, Neighborhood Networks establishes multiservice community learning centers that bring technology access to residents of all ages living in insured and assisted housing...

and

Whereas Neighborhood Networks centers provide many programs and services to residents, including employment training and opportunities, computer access and training, educational opportunities, healthcare services, and social services...

Now, therefore,

I, _____

serving as _____

of _____

do hereby proclaim August 1–6, 2005, as Neighborhood Networks Week.

Signed _____ this _____ day of _____, 2005

Sample Media Advisory

A media advisory is an invitation for media to attend the event. Although simple and short, media advisories are designed to spark reporters' interest so that they will want to attend the event.

Media advisories are usually less than a page. Include one-line descriptions explaining where, when, and why you are holding the event and who will be there. Add one or two brief paragraphs providing background information.

Media Advisory

Detroit Neighborhood Networks Center
123 Maple Drive
Detroit, MI 12345

For Immediate Release
[Date], 2005

Contact
John Smith (555) 555-5555

Detroit Neighborhood Networks Center Holds Open House

What: Community Open House
Where: Detroit Neighborhood Networks Center, 123 Maple Drive, Detroit, MI 12345
When: [Date], 2005, Noon–4 p.m.
Who: John Smith, Center Coordinator

City, State—In celebration of Neighborhood Networks Week 2005: *Invite the Neighborhood, Widen the Network.*, Name Neighborhood Networks Center, located at Address, will officially open on Date, providing # residents with daily access to computer job training, educational opportunities, and social services, such as transportation.

Equipped with # computers, the Name Center is one of hundreds of Neighborhood Networks centers that have opened nationwide, including # in State. The center plans to offer computer training and adult education classes, GED certification, and afterschool youth services.

Among the scheduled speakers at Name Center's grand opening are Names of Speakers.

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005: *Invite the Neighborhood. Widen the Network.*, is a weeklong celebration that recognizes the achievements of Neighborhood Networks centers across the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005 is one of many events that are part of a yearlong observance of Neighborhood Networks' 10th Anniversary. Launched by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in September 1995, Neighborhood Networks is a community-based initiative that provides residents of HUD insured and assisted housing with onsite access to computer technology, resources, and job-training skills as a vehicle to self-sufficiency.

Additional information is available from the HUD Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org or by calling the Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll free at (888) 312-2743.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

Sample News Release

The news release provides more indepth information than a media advisory, and should be included in center media packets. A news release should be typed or reproduced on 8½-by-11-inch paper and should be no longer than two pages. If the release describes an event, it should contain the date, place, time, and person to contact.

News Release

Detroit Neighborhood Networks Center
123 Maple Drive
Detroit, MI 12345

For Immediate Release

[Date], 2005

Contact

John Smith (555) 555-5555

New Neighborhood Networks Center Opens in Detroit

City, State—In celebration of Neighborhood Networks Week 2005: Invite the Neighborhood, Widen the Network., Name Neighborhood Networks Center, located at Address, will officially open on Date, providing # residents with daily access to computer job training, educational opportunities, and social services, such as transportation.

Equipped with # computers, the Name Center is one of hundreds of Neighborhood Networks centers that have opened nationwide, including # in State. The center plans to offer computer training and adult education classes, GED certification, and afterschool youth services.

Among the scheduled speakers at Name Center's grand opening are Names of Speakers.

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005: *Invite the Neighborhood. Widen the Network.*, is a weeklong celebration that recognizes the achievements of Neighborhood Networks centers across the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Neighborhood Networks Week 2005 is one of many events that are part of a yearlong observance of Neighborhood Networks' 10th Anniversary. Launched by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in September 1995, Neighborhood Networks is a community-based initiative that provides residents of HUD insured and assisted housing with onsite access to computer technology, resources, and job-training skills as a vehicle to self-sufficiency.

Additional information is available from the HUD Neighborhood Networks Web site at www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org or by calling the Neighborhood Networks Information Center toll free at (888) 312-2743.

Sample Radio Public Service Announcement

Local radio stations may be willing to promote center events by airing a public service announcement. These short announcements promote public causes and are run free of charge, usually in unsold time slots during scheduled commercial breaks. Repeated mention of such an event on the air for days or weeks usually results in a large attendance.

Public Service Announcement (15 seconds)

On date, join name of your center for its grand opening at address of center.

Call name of contact person at phone number and learn how you can help strengthen your community during HUD's Neighborhood Networks Week 2005.

Public Service Announcement (20 seconds or 30 seconds, depending on amount of detail)

On date, join name of center at address of center for a type of event, such as picnic, health fair, and so on.

The goal of the event is describe the goal. You will be able to describe what people can do at the event.

Call name of contact person at center contact telephone number and learn how you can help strengthen your community during HUD's Neighborhood Networks Week 2005.

Neighborhood Networks Week

Planning Guide

Sample Event Invitation

Create a personal event invitation for community members. Do not forget important information. An invitation should include:

- ◆ Center's name.
- ◆ Contact information.
- ◆ Description of the event.
- ◆ Event specifics (date, time, and location).

YOU'RE INVITED!

You are cordially invited to join Name Neighborhood Networks Center on Date in celebration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) Neighborhood Networks Week 2005: *Invite the Neighborhood. Widen the Network.*

What: Grand Opening

When: Day, Date, Time

Where: Detroit Neighborhood Networks Center

RSVP: (5 days before event date)

Detroit Neighborhood Networks Center
123 Maple Drive, Detroit, MI, 12345
Phone: (555) 555-5555